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## Common good continues to bring common regions together

*Alaska shares blueprint for responsible oil and gas development with environmental experts from Sakhalin.*

Despite a recent tragedy that took life of Sakhalin Governor Igor Farkhutdinov and twelve of his cabinet members, exchanges between Sakhalin and Alaska continue as scheduled.

A group of environmental experts representing Sakhalin regional administration, academia, emergency response agencies, and private sector companies is coming to Anchorage September 16 to participate in the 3<sup>rd</sup> annual Offshore Oil and Gas Environmental Management Program. This two week training is sponsored by the State of Alaska Division of Trade and Development and financed by a grant from the U.S. Agency for International Development.

"The main goal of the program is to share information and technology that improves Sakhalin's environmental emergency prevention, preparedness and response and helps reduce negative impacts of oil and gas development," said Margy Johnson, director of the Department of Community and Economic Development's Division of Trade & Development.

The program will offer practical advice on dealing with oil spills and hazardous substances, management of waste products, permitting of offshore activities and onshore infrastructure, and the development and implementation of health and safety programs. Participants will learn about the latest environmental technologies, equipment, treatment systems, waste management and remediation strategies. Most importantly, they will meet and spend extended time with their Alaskan counterparts that will foster future collaboration and business relationships.

Implemented in partnership with Minerals Management Service Alaska and University of Alaska American Russian Center, the program includes meetings with relevant Federal, State and municipal agencies, major environmental

*"Promoting a healthy economy and strong communities"*

industry associations, fishing and tribal groups, oil and gas producers, and support industry. Visits to refineries, oil platforms, training facilities, response barge, and other sites are part of the program.

“There are many common issues like geography, extreme weather conditions, indigenous populations, military installations, and pre-existing industries that tie Sakhalin and Alaska. Alaskan environmental firms have all it takes to be successful in exporting their expertise to Sakhalin,” said Rada Jones, Russia Trade Specialist for the State of Alaska. “There’s plenty of environmental work to be done. USAID is now promoting EconLinks grants that cover travel expenses of US businesses to Russia to implement solutions to industrial and urban environmental problems,” Jones said.

Sakhalin's relationship with Alaska is a case of commonalties: common issues, common goals and common benefits. Twenty-five years of experience is all that separates Alaska from Sakhalin on the road to economic boom due to oil and gas development. On this road sharing information and technology that enables environmentally responsible development delivers common good to both regions.

Alaska companies interested in learning about environmental work on Sakhalin are encouraged to schedule meetings with members of the delegation. To learn more about the program agenda, participants or to schedule a meeting, contact Leonid Kokaurov at 907-786-4167, [acti@gci.net](mailto:acti@gci.net) or Rada Jones at 269-8131 [rada\\_jones@dcad.state.ak.us](mailto:rada_jones@dcad.state.ak.us). The delegation will be attending Sept. 18 Resource Development Council breakfast meeting.

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